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Illusions.

[From the Technologist.]

Reality is too real. Only prosy, mat-
ter-of-fact minds seek for real things.
It is for the most part the unreal that
makes life enjoyable. Deprive man of
all the illusions and delusions of life,
and he would be but little more than a
clod of organized earth. It requires
the threefold kingdoms of illusions,
delusion and reality to enable the hu-
man mind to form noble conceptions.
There must be imagination to picture,
delusion to sharpen judgment, and re-
ality to furnish elements for combina-
tions. Active minds, soon tire of the
real things of life, and learn to live
much in the pure regions of the ideal.
As a tree or plant only wants just
enough of earth to keep it up and brace
it upright, so the mental organism
wants only enough of the material to
make a secure anchorage; to be able to
touch bottom is all that is necessary.

The human mind delights in illu-
sion, but abhors delusion. Illusion is
merely an unreal image, pre-
sented to the bodily or mental vision,
and known at the time to be un-
real; as, for example, a painting con-
taining a sleeping beauty, a winding
stream, a clump of trees, a setting sun
and an evening sky. Not one of these,
nor yet the whole, will ever be mistaken
for what they are not, and yet they
may produce all the real emotions
of a real sleeping beauty seen upon
the bank of a clear winding stream,
beneath the shade of a clump of trees,
at evening when the sun is setting.
But let a Wall Street sharper build a
house of paper in exact imitation of
brick and brown stone, and sell the
same to some confident Miss Nancy,
under the impression that she is get-
ting a substantial palace, and when she
discovers the cheat, there is a manifest
delusion. The pleasing object that
allures and delights is a source of un-
bounded gratification; while the showy
imitation that deceives, is a source of
unbounded disgust and abhorrence.

Now, notwithstanding all the cry
that is made against illusions and delu-
sions, notwithstanding all the eager
search and longing for the true and the
real, still very much of life is made up
of illusion, and by far the greater part
of all the enjoyment and all the good—
all the permanent good that is, comes
by and through some form of illusion.
Life begins almost with illusion. The
mother who wants her child to be a
good child, secures good actions by
some promised reward. It may be
sugar plums, if the child has learned to
like these. Here is a twofold illusion.
The child's illusion is the sugar plum;
to its little mind a sweet and all-absorb-
ing object that keeps expectation on
tiptoe; the mother's illusion is the in-
terval of quiet and good behaviour,
which she seeks to prolong as much as
possible, so as to make a good invest-
ment of her rewards. The real aim of
the mother, if she is wise, is to develop
and strengthen a habit of decent obedi-
ence in her offspring; if she is short-
sighted and unwise, she only makes a
business transaction, with no eye to a

permanent result or future benefit.

Take tactics directly the reverse of
the foregoing. A child is unruly; its
tutor desires to make a clean breast of
the matter and secure a reformation.
He prepares an already limber birch by
roasting it in the fire, that it may fit
the more snugly to unruly pedestals.
After a proper mental preparation, the
lower limbs of the stripling are tickled
into a healthy glow, perhaps to rather
an exhilarating smart. Feelings of fear
and suspense leave a vivid recollection
upon the mind. The actual suffering
imprints the whole affair deeply in the
mental organization, and altogether
they form a sort of negative illusion,
which the child will avoid provoking
anew; just as a puppy will shun a hot
poker. The illusion is a fixity that will
last, and with it, in the mind's eye, the
child will go on acting in the same way
most likely to develop a good character.
Caution will sprout up and grow as
surely as a cucumber will grow under
the influence of a warm April shower.

Taller children have their illusions.
The youth preparing for college, or
even studying well on in the course, has
but little idea of the scope and aim of
education. College rank, some glitter-
ing prize at the year's end, some worthy
honor conferred at the termination of
the course, is held out as inducement
to superhuman efforts. The bait is
readily taken; the prize is often won,
but that is not what is gained after all.
The illusion only served to spur the
hundred-and-one competitors on, while
all have obtained more or less discipline
of the mental powers, more or less
power of independent and consecutive
thought, more or less fixity of purpose
and perseverance. While pursuing the
coveted illusion, the man himself has
been unconsciously growing—all the
good points of a mental giant have been
developing, and the prize, when obtain-
ed, is like the boy's butterfly when
caught, only a little dust in the hand.

The period at which men start in life,
is a period of most vivid illusions. The
young merchant and the young profes-
sional are both alike full of hope, and
impatient for the consummation of
plans that only time can convince are
not to be realized. Wealth, honor,
fame, are beautiful castles that seem
almost within the grasp—beautiful,
bright illusions that are quite as beau-
tiful for being illusions as if they were
real, for high attainments depend not
so much upon what is really possessed,
as upon what is hoped for. No one finds
what he expects, yet everyone makes
some approach towards his ideal. Life
is fresh, full of exuberance, bright in
hope, and if one object evades, there is
always another at hand.

The young man about to wed the
illusion of his heart, soul and mind, sees
the future all brilliant with visions of
domestic bliss; there is the ideal some-
body which he is too blind to see in her
real character; the one that makes life
worth living under any circumstances,
and equally intolerable under any cir-
cumstances if not possessed; the untold
and unmeasured joys of a supposed
virtuous union; a supply of lively,
cheerful spirits that are never to fail
during all the lonely evenings by the
domestic fireside; spirits ever bright
and congenial, tested beyond the possi-
bility of failure by a few hours' inter-
course once a week, for three months
or more. Enticing dreams of affection,
already partially realized, that are to
increase and grow more and more real,
as month after month, and year after
year, glides sweetly by. Who can hesi-
tate to embark in such a delectable mode
of existence as this? Alas! many a
gloomy day is ushered in by a glorious
flood of sunlight. Go, when the dream
is passed, when the life is nearly ended
and illusion no longer needed, and ask
the worn out, sobered pilgrim, now well
covered with the dust of the battle of
life, what has been the result of all his
earliest fancies? Will he admit one of
them to have been a delusion, or even
one to have been entirely fulfilled?
He will tell you his happy days have
been few and far between, his domestic
bliss, always a land flowing with milk
and honey, which he was just about to
possess, but upon which he never quite
entered. Senses, expectations, antici-
pations and affections, all—all one huge
illusion, that the more you seek, the
surer you become that you will win in
the next trial; but the beauty of it is,
that like to-morrow, it is always just a
little way ahead.

What, now, is the aim and scope of
illusion in life? Is it mere amusement
and nothing more? Nay, it is the
main-spring of all life's activities, the
grand driving-wheel of all human ener-
gies. If, at the outset of a game of
chess, or of croquet, the partners knew
the result as accurately as at the end,
they would never play the game. If

the journey of life were all mapped out
in one level plain, so that all its events
were as visible at the outset as at the
close, few, if any, would find courage
sufficient to begin the task, and none
perhaps would deem the result worth
the trouble required to attain it. As it
is, every game must be played in order
to get the true result; life must be gone
through with, in order to know how it
will end. It does the smitten suitor no
good to be told that the object of his
passion is a coquette; nay, he is doubt-
less displeased at the suggestion. He
can only know the fact by being jilted.
The idea that he may win, eventually,
is an illusion that allures him to the
result, as certainly as the scent of a
woodcock leads a pointer to point his
game.

It matters not how many failures
there are in life, no one will ever be-
lieve life to be unreal, no one ever will,
no one ever can, believe life to be a
delusion, for that were to pronounce it
a lie, which it is not. The real truth
of the whole matter is this: human
beings are only pupils all their days.
Life is a school, and illusion is the
prize offered to all who strive in the
school of experience. Man in business
—and in professional life, must have
illusion, must have some reward held
up, that he seeks to win, or he will at
once pronounce life aimless. Yet, it is
true, that the ostensible aim of life, the
illusion that keeps the man awake and
earnest, is seldom, if ever, the highest
aim. The merchant seeks wealth, gets
it, but that is not the reward of his
twenty years of toil and care. To seek
riches is not the highest aim if he be a
true man. By getting the riches, he
has developed a character. The wealth
is a reward, but one which he may at
any time lose; the reward which he
has attained, by and through the illu-
sion of wealth, is habits of perseverance,
of honesty, of consecutive thought and
concentrated action. He has formed
and developed a certain stamp of man-
hood, that will go with him beyond the
pearly gates, when he lays off material
things, and sets out to live as a pure
spirit. It is these things that consti-
tute real treasure, lasting reward, in-
vestment that will pay the owner divi-
dends regularly in quantities of satisfac-
tion throughout eternity.

It is vain, therefore, that the patriot,
the statesman or the philanthropist
should complain that his fellow men
have not rewarded him sufficiently with
wealth, with titles, or with honor. Such
things, mere illusions to act well one's
part, are not rewards for right action.
There would be no such thing as a noble
action, if these were the rewards.
To be an upright man, to have the
power of doing noble deeds, and to do
them, is far more than all objective
rewards.

Common honesty, that just fulfills an
agreement, says honesty is the best
policy. But honesty is not, it cannot
be policy at all. The moment honesty
becomes policy, it ceases to be honesty,
and degenerates from an aim to an illu-
sion. Put it thus: honesty is the best
policy, is just equal to, dishonesty is
the best policy, so far as merit is con-
cerned; and for this reason, that hon-
esty is put on a par with money. It is
the same as to say honesty is worth to
me to-day, one thousand dollars; and
that is the same as to say, dishonesty is
worth to me to-day one thousand dol-
lars. It is a mere business transaction,
a mere equation in either case. The real
point is to aim at the highest star of the
firmament, and that is to be honest for
the sake of honesty. Let the illusion be
something between, let it be material
reward, but principles of action must
never be prostituted so as to be only
illusions. Illusion says, act in order to
have, but aim says, act in order to be.
Illusion makes a man act, but illusion
and action make character, make a man.

DAMP CHURCHES.—It is surprising,
at this season of the year, when most
people are affected by atmospheric
changes, the apathy or indifference
which exists in country places of having
the damp, sepulchral air of churches,
locked up during the six days of the
week, improved by heating before the
congregation assembles. We have
known persons predisposed to thoracic
affections, suffer severely by sitting in
cold churches throughout the morning
service. All we can say is, that when
the temperature and condition of the
atmosphere of churches are neglected,
it is an essential of great moment over-
looked, and that persons coming to
worship are thereby made to suffer, not
through any inattention on their part,
but owing to utter carelessness on the
part of those who should know better.
Our remark will meet, it is hoped, with
the attention which the importance of
the subject demands.

Man and Wife.

The natural destiny of a woman is,
we presume, to get married. We know
at all events, that it is one she is very
anxious to fulfill. Scarcely does a young
girl enter upon her "teens" before she
begins to aspire to a settlement in life.
Personal adornment is sharply looked
to, personal attractions are set off to the
best possible advantage, and a hundred
little-tricks and artifices of the toilet
are resorted to in order to attract the
notice and win the affections of some
congenial specimen of the male sex. It
would require no small amount of
time and space to describe in the brief-
est manner all the trouble that young
ladies take in order to achieve a desir-
able conquest. Suffice it to say that
much study is devoted to the consid-
eration of what to wear and how to wear
it, when to be merry and when to be pen-
sive, when to smile and when to frown,
how to walk and how to sit. In short,
the entire life of a marriageable maid is
a continuous effort to wear a mask, to
lay aside the natural and put on the
artificial. Nor, to tell the honest truth,
are the young gentlemen anything the
better. Most of them may not have as
much leisure time on their hands, yet
of their spare hours no inconsiderable
portion is squandered on those arts
which they would fain have us believe
are the exclusive domain of the fair sex.
Fashionable tailors are patronized, po-
matoms and cosmetics are called into
requisition, and there are exquisites even
who torture themselves as much to pro-
cure a small waist as any boarding school
miss in the land. It is amusing in the
highest degree for one who has
passed the heyday of his youth, to
watch the assiduity with which these
"young bloods" practice all the habits
which they think look manly, and
tend to captivate the fair ones. The
amount of elegance which some of them
contrive to throw into the twirl of a
cane or the puff of a cigar, is really
something wonderful to contemplate.
And then when the two are brought
together in the drawing-room or ball-
room, how touching appear the grace,
the timidity and the artlessness of the
maiden, how noble the vigor, the con-
fidence and the protecting chivalry of
the gentleman! That is the poetical
side of the business. How disagree-
ably it does contrast with the prosy real-
ity of life. Let us scrutinize the life
of our supposititious couple only a few
months after marriage. Where now is
that spirit of self-abnegation which
formerly prompted each one to seek the
other's pleasure instead of his or her
own? The lady becomes morbidly
sensitive to all the failings of her liege
lord, and she shows very little hesita-
tion in upbraiding him. Having se-
cured her conquest, obtained that set-
tlement in life for which she was so
anxious, she abandons all the pretty
artifices by which she gained the heart
of her husband. If she dresses well, it
is to please the world outside. Her
amiability, her smiles, her cheerfulness
are reserved for out door use, or else for
decoration of her guests. If this be
not a pleasing picture, the portrait of
the husband which truth compels us to
draw is still less attractive. Marriage
certainly works a change in him. The
respectful almost religious, deference
with which he was wont to treat the
slightest wish of his affianced is re-
placed by a brusquerie which, if it does
not amount to positive rudeness, as is
often the case, approaches very nearly
to it. Instead of finding a pleasure in
the society of his wife, he seems smit-
ten with *ennui* every minute he is in
her presence. All his amusements
are to be had out of his own house.
Thus indifference takes the place of
love on both sides, and happy, indeed
are they whose mutual repulsion goes no
farther, and who can wear their lives
away in passive tolerance of each other's
failings. Such is, in too many instan-
ces, the history of married couples.
It recalls to our mind the aphorism of
poor Lolo Montez, who, with all her
faults, desired earnestly to effect a re-
formation in our social fabric. "It
is strange to me that men and women
take so much pains to get married, and
afterwards so little trouble to remain
so."—Chronicle.

Any dunce of a lawyer may win a
good cause, but to him who manages
right, and adroitly wins a bad cause,
much credit will be due. So it is with
farming, for little credit is due to the
farmer who, upon the exhaustive prin-
ciple obtains good crops from rich soil,
while his land is rapidly deteriorating;
but the farmer who gets a good return
from a poor soil, and at the same time
improves his land by alternating crops,
manuring and underdraining, will be
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